

SOUTH CAROLINA.

General Sickles's First Order.

Whites and Blacks Equal Before the Law.

HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH CAROLINA, CHARLESTON, Jan. 17, 1866.

GENERAL ORDERS, NO. 1.—I. To the end that civil rights and immunities may be enjoyed; that kindly relations among the inhabitants of the State may be established; that the rights and duties of the employer, and the free laborer respectively, may be defined; that the soil may be cultivated and the system of free labor fairly undertaken; that the owners of estates may be secure in the possession of their lands and tenements; that persons, able and willing to work, may have employment; that idleness and vagrancy may be disengaged, and encouragement given to industry and thrift; and that humane provision may be made for the aged, infirm and destitute, the following regulations are established for the government of all concerned in this Department:

II. All laws shall be applicable alike to all the inhabitants. No person shall be held incompetent to sue, make complaints or to testify, because of color or caste.

III. All the employments of husbandry and useful arts, and all kinds of labor, shall be open to all persons, irrespective of color or caste; nor shall any freedmen be obliged to pay any tax or any fee for a license, nor be amenable to any municipal or parish ordinance, not imposed upon all other persons.

IV. The lawful industry of all persons who live under the protection of the United States, and owe obedience to its laws, being useful to the individual, and essential to the welfare of society, no person will be restrained from seeking employment when not bound by voluntary agreement to another, and when not compelled to go on account of business. All combinations or agreements which are intended to hinder, or may so operate as to hinder, in any way, the employment of labor—or to limit compensation for labor—or to compel labor to be involuntarily performed in certain places or for certain persons; as well as all combinations or agreements to prevent the sale or hire of lands or tenements, are declared to be misdemeanors; and any person or persons convicted thereof shall be punished by fine not exceeding \$500, or by imprisonment, not to exceed six months, or by both sum fine and imprisonment.

V. Actions for labor or personal service of any kind, or for the use and occupation of lands and tenements, or for any other lawful purpose, between freedmen and other persons, where fair wage, will be impartially enforced against either party violating the head of a family or a member thereof.

VIL Able-bodied freedmen, when they leave the premises in which they may be domiciled, shall take with them and provide for such of their relatives as by the laws of South Carolina, all citizens are obliged to maintain.

VII. When able-bodied freed persons are domiciled on premises where they have been heretofore held as slaves, until adequate provision, approved by the General commanding, be made for them by the State or local authorities, or otherwise; and they shall not be removed from the premises, unless for disorderly behavior, misdemeanor, or other offense committed by the head of a family or a member thereof.

VIII. Freed persons unable to labor, by reason of age, infirmity, and orphan children of tender years, shall have allotted to them by owners suitable quarters on the premises where they have been heretofore domiciled as slaves, until adequate provision, approved by the General commanding, be made for them by the State or local authorities, or otherwise; and they shall not be removed from the premises, unless for disorderly behavior, misdemeanor, or other offense committed by the head of a family or a member thereof.

VII. Able-bodied freedmen, when they leave the premises in which they may be domiciled, shall take with them and provide for such of their relatives as by the laws of South Carolina, all citizens are obliged to maintain.

VIII. When able-bodied freed persons are domiciled on premises where they have been heretofore held as slaves, and are not employed thereon or elsewhere, they shall be permitted to remain, on showing to the satisfaction of the Commanding Officer of the Post, that they have made diligent and proper efforts to obtain employment.

XIX. When able-bodied freed persons are domiciled on premises where they have been heretofore held as slaves, and are not employed thereon or elsewhere, they shall be permitted to remain, on showing to the satisfaction of the Commanding Officer of the Post, that they have made diligent and proper efforts to obtain employment.

X. Freed persons occupying premises without the authority of the United States, or the permission of the owner, who have been heretofore held as slaves, shall not be received by the Commanding Officer of the Post, on the complaint of the owner, and proof of the refusal of said freed persons to remove after ten days' notice.

XI. Any person employed or domiciled on a plantation, refused to work there, after having been offered employment by the owner or lessor, or fair terms, approved by the agent of the Freedmen's Bureau, such freedman or woman shall remove from the premises within ten days after such offer, and due notice to remove.

XII. When able-bodied freed persons are domiciled on premises where they have been heretofore held as slaves, and are not employed thereon or elsewhere, they shall be permitted to remain, on showing to the satisfaction of the Commanding Officer of the Post, that they have made diligent and proper efforts to obtain employment.

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XV. The vagrant laws of the State of South Carolina, applicable to free white persons, will be recognized as the only vagrant laws applicable to the freedmen; nevertheless, such laws shall not be considered applicable to persons who are without employment, if they shall prove that they have been unable to obtain employment, or diligent efforts do so.

XVI. It shall be the duty of officers commanding posts, to see that issues of rations to freedmen are confined to destitute persons, who are unable to work because of infirmities arising from old age, or chronic diseases, orphan children too young to work, and refugee freedmen returning to their homes with the sanction of the proper authorities; and in ordering their issues, commanding officers will be careful not to encourage idleness or vagrancy. District officers will make considerable numbers of these cases, tri-monthly.

XVII. The proper authorities of the State in the several municipalities and Districts, shall proceed to make suitable provision for their poor, without distinction of color; in default of which, the General Commanding will levy an equitable tax on persons and property sufficient for the support of the poor.

XVIII. The constitutional rights of all loyal and well-disposed inhabitants to bear arms will not be interfered with, except to prohibit the carrying of concealed weapons; nor to authorize any person to enter with arms on the premises of another against his consent. No one shall bear arms who has borne arms against the United States, unless he shall have taken the Amnesty oath prescribed in the Proclamation of the President of the United States, dated May 20, 1865, or the Oath of Allegiance, prescribed in the Proclamation of the President, dated December 8, 1863, within the time prescribed therein. And no disorderly person, vagrant, or disturber of the peace, shall be allowed to bear arms.

XIX. To secure the same equal justice and personal liberty to the freedmen as to other inhabitants, no penalties or punishments different from those to which all persons are amenable, shall be imposed on freed people; and all crimes and offenses which are prohibited under existing laws, shall be understood as prohibited in the case of freedmen; and if committed by a freedman, shall be punished by indenture of apprenticeship.

XIX. Persons whose conduct tends to a breach of the peace may be required to give security for their good behavior, and in default thereof shall be held in custody.

XIX. All injuries to the person or property committed by or upon freed persons shall be punished in the manner provided by the laws of South Carolina, for like injuries to the persons or property of citizens thereof. If no provision be made by the laws of the State, then the punishment for such offenses shall be referred to the course of the common law; and in the case of any injury to person or property, not prohibited by the laws of the State, which would be punished by the laws of the State, it will be the duty of the Court before which the trial is had, shall be deemed proper, subject to the approval of the General Commanding.

XIX. All arrests for whatever cause will be reported tri-monthly, with the proceedings thereon, through the Adjutant General.

XIX. Commanding Officers of Districts, State Districts, and Posts, within their commands respectively, in the absence of the duly-appointed agent, will perform any duty appertaining to the ordinary agents of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, carefully observing for their guidance all orders published by the Commissioner or Assistant Commissioner, or other competent authority.

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